

REMARKS

Reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the foregoing Amendments and the Remarks that follow.

Claims 1-29 and 31-35 are pending in the application, with claims 1, 17, and 29 being the independent claims. Claim 30 was previously canceled. Claims 1, 17, 26, 28, and 29 are currently amended. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Information Disclosure Statement

Applicant thanks the Examiner for correcting the transposed numbers on the PTO-1449 form submitted with the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS), filed February 27, 2002. Applicant respectfully submits that RE 34,954 to Haber et al. was submitted in the IDS, yet RE 34,594 was inadvertently attributed to Haber et al. on the PTO-1449. Examiner Betit corrected this typographical error when reviewing the references submitted with this IDS, for which applicant is grateful.

Allowable Subject Matter

At ¶ 5 on page 4, the Office Action indicates that claims 1-29, and 31-35 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the objections, as well as the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, ¶ 2, set forth in the Office Action and discussed specifically below.

Applicant respectfully thanks the Office for its determination, and respectfully submits that, in light of the foregoing amendments, and the following remarks with respect to the objections and rejections, claims 1-29, and 31-35 are believed to be in condition for allowance. Thus, applicant respectfully requests that the outstanding objections and rejections be withdrawn.

Objections to the Claims

At ¶ 2 on page 2, the Office Action objected to claims 26 and 27 for informalities. The above-entered amendments address, *inter alia*, these informalities. Specifically, the amendments to claim 26 correct the reading of the claim in accordance with the understanding afforded by the Examiner.

Claim 27 was objected to for being dependent from claim 26. With entry of the above amendment to claim 26, it is in proper form.

With the entry of these claim amendments, applicant respectfully submits that all of the claim objections have been properly accommodated or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider these objections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112 ¶2

At ¶¶ 3-4 on pages 3-4, the Office Action presented indefiniteness rejections specifically directed to claims 1, 17, 28, and 29, and indirectly to claims 2-16, 18-28, and 31-35 as being dependent on the specifically rejected claims.

Applicant respectfully submits that all of these rejections have been rendered moot or are accommodated by the above-entered amendments. For at least the above reasons, applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-29 and 31-35 are believed to be patentable and in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all currently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicant believes that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Dated: September 24, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

By W. Russell Swindell

W. Russell Swindell

Registration No.: 50,906

VENABLE LLP

P.O. Box 34385

Washington, DC 20043-9998

(202) 344-4000

(202) 344-4053 (Direct)

(202) 344-8300 (Fax)

Attorney/Agent For Applicant

::ODMA\PCDOCS\DC2DOCS\1583020\1